

REPRESENTATIVE DIANA S. URBAN
FORTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 011
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
CAPITOL: 860-240-8710
Diana.Urban@cga.ct.gov



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State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Good Morning Senator Kennedy, Senator Miner Representative DeMicco and members of the Environment Committee. For the record I am Diana Urban and I represent the 43rd district. I am here this morning to testify on HB 6347, HB6335, HB5499, and SB522.

I would like to thank the Committee for raising HB 6347 AA Requiring the Department of Public Health to Provide Findings to Complainants concerning complaints of wrong doing against veterinarians. I expect that you will hear stories from people who lost pets that they consider family to what they consider to be a mistake on the part of the veterinarian. My first exposure to this came through an 80 year old WWII veteran who had brought his elderly very sick small dog in to the animal hospital to be euthanized. An extremely difficult decision for any pet owner. Unfortunately the whole procedure was botched by a veterinarian technician. The small dog was reduced to whimpering, crying, and outright howling in front of her owner as the veterinarian technician could not find a vein and when he finally did he did not administer the proper drug or the proper amount. It was a horrifying experience.

The veteran subsequently asked for a determination from the Department of Public Health. He received back a one line letter stating "the Department has concluded that no violations of the statutes governing veterinary practice have been identified, therefore the case is closed". This determination takes many months and the complainant is never involved as far as seeing any of the records examined or transcripts of any interviews that took place.

What this bill proposes is recognizing that the Department of Public Health has made a legal determination and as such this determination should be appealable in Superior Court, much as any license or permit denial or CHRO ruling is appealable. If the complainant feels strongly that they would like access to and review of all the material the Department used to make their decision then he or she has the option of taking it to Superior Court.

This is not intended to hurt Veterinarians or their reputation; it is directed at a legal determination of an agency (in this case the Department of Public Health) which should be appealable in Superior Court.

I will briefly comment on HB 5499 only to say when we first discussed Sunday hunting it was recognized that guns on a Sunday were just inappropriate and that

we in the State of Connecticut were going to respect the ability of people to enjoy the woods on a Sunday without the sound of gunshots. I am surprised the Committee is considering this bill. I realize it is on private land but I would point out that those lands often abut other activities. In my case my riding ring has property owned by others on 3 sides. I would urge the Committee to reject this bill as well as the bill authorizing bear hunting (SB522). We have been responding to the habituation issue and I believe it is premature to promulgate a hunting season for bears in Connecticut.

On HB 6335 AA Prohibiting the Sale and Trade of Ivory and Rhinoceros Horn in Connecticut I realize that we have seen this bill before and that there are concerns from antique dealers and you will be hearing extensive testimony from them. I am just going to point out that the elephant is nearing extinction and sale of their Ivory is being used to fund terrorist activity. This is a simple demand/supply equation. Shut down the demand and the price will plummet thus rendering the ivory useless for terrorists.

You have quite an agenda today and I am in favor of the bills addressing animal shelters, Cecil's law, and farmers. I would particularly mention one more and that is HJ 99 Protecting Open Space through the Community Investment Act. I would hope we could move that forward.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and I am happy to answer any questions

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana Urban", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Diana Urban
Representative, District 43